

to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of modern criminals, including those involved in terrorism, other violent crimes, drug trafficking, money laundering, and other white collar crime. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes: taking the testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records, and articles of evidence; serving documents; locating or identifying persons or items; transferring persons in custody for testimony or for other assistance; executing requests for searches and seizures; assisting in proceedings related to seizure, immobilization and forfeiture of assets, restitution, and collection of fines; executing procedures involving experts; and providing any other form of assistance appropriate under the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
April 2, 1998.

### **Remarks on the Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters**

*April 3, 1998*

**The President.** Thank you very much. Before I read my statement, I'd like to make a brief comment on a momentous event which occurred during my trip to Africa, back here. The Vice President turned 50, and I hope all of you noticed the increased gravity and maturity of his aura. [Laughter] I personally am greatly relieved. Not long before he turned 50, as I told him when I called him, an elderly lady came up to me, and she said, "I think you and that young man are doing such a good job." [Laughter] And it's nice to have a middle-aged team now at the White House.

**The Vice President.** She was very elderly. [Laughter]

**The President.** Let me say, Hillary and I are delighted to be back from what was a wonderful trip to Africa. We are working hard to strengthen the bonds of the African

continent that I am convinced is in the midst of a renaissance, where political and economic liberty is on the rise.

I only wish every American could have been with me every step of the way to see, first, Africa, not only its problems, which are profound, but the energy and intelligence and determination of the people. I also wish every American could have had yet one more opportunity to see how a very important part of the world sees America—still as a beacon of equality and freedom and hope for opportunity.

Today we learned that the unemployment rate in the first quarter of this year, averaging 4.7 percent, is the lowest it's been since 1970—28 years. While there will be ups and downs, our economy continues to be one of the strongest in history. Over the past year we've seen the strongest wage growth in 20 years; inflation is still low; homeownership now at a record level. As we approach the longest peacetime expansion in our history, this is a springtime of hope and opportunity for the American people.

Our economy is the product of the hard work, the creativity, the innovation of our citizens, and the ingenuity and drive of our businesses. But also it is the fruit, as the Vice President said, of the comprehensive economic strategy we have pursued since 1993, a strategy for the new economy.

The coming months will now test our Nation. It will determine whether we will maintain our discipline and pursue our priorities to strengthen our country for the new century. We can make this a time of action as well as a time of abundance, to secure our prosperity well into the future, to widen the circle of opportunity so that all Americans have a chance to reap the rewards of economic growth.

First, we should go and balance the budget this year and do it in a way that continues our investment in our people and their future. With projected budget surpluses of one trillion dollars over the next decade, I am pleased that Members of Congress of both parties have joined my call to reserve every penny of the surplus until we save Social Security first. This is very significant. I compliment the leadership of both parties. It will strengthen our Nation.

At the same time, as we live within a balanced budget, we must invest to create prosperity for the future. Many times I have said that in the new economy, education is the leading economic indicator. We will continue to lead the world only if our children receive the world's best education. In that context, I am very concerned that the budget plan now working its way through the Senate will squeeze out critical investments in education and children.

I believe America must address the challenges before us. Class size for our children—we must hire 100,000 new teachers so that we can reduce those class sizes. We must spur school modernization to make our classes smaller and our schools safer. We must invest in pathbreaking scientific research that will lengthen our lives and promote prosperity into the 21st century. And we must make those investments which will make credible our call for higher standards and higher performance in our schools. The budget now being drafted by Congress simply does not meet these urgent national priorities.

I'm also determined that highway spending, though it is quite important and though our budget provides for a very impressive increase in investment in highways and mass transit, must be—such spending must be within the balanced budget and should not crowd out critical investments in education, child care, health care, or threaten our budget discipline.

In the coming months I look forward to working with Congress in cooperation with lawmakers of both parties so that America stays on the path of both fiscal discipline and targeted investment, a balanced budget that is in balance with our values and our long-term interest in the future. That is what has brought us this far since 1993. We should not depart from that strategy now.

Finally, I am determined to seize this historic opportunity to pass bipartisan legislation to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco. This Congress can be the Congress that saves millions of children's lives. I want to say that we seem to be making some progress on that, with the vote in the Senate committee, but there is an enormous amount of work still to be done. And I hope

during this working recess the lawmakers of both Houses and both parties will be talking to the folks back home about the tobacco legislation and will come back here at the end of this month with a renewed determination to actually pass legislation that will get the job done.

Our economy is the strongest in a generation; our social fabric is on the mend; our leadership around the world, as we saw on the trip to Africa, remains unrivalled. But our history and our heritage tells us that we can do better and that our success depends upon our constant effort to do better. The American people want us to use this sunlit moment not to sit back and enjoy but to act. We were hired by the American people to act. If we do so, in the 21st century the American dream will be more powerful than ever.

Thank you.

**Q.** Do you have any comments on reports that Kenneth Starr is being urged to indict Monica Lewinsky and name you as a co-conspirator?

### **Tobacco Legislation**

**Q.** On the tobacco deal, sir, how concerned are you that one or more of the tobacco companies might walk away from this proposed settlement? And do you believe that you need their cooperation both so that there is money for your budget priorities and so that you can win restrictions on cigarette advertising?

**The President.** Well, the latter is of greater concern. That is, their agreement or lack of it would influence the way Congress would have to raise the money, through raising the price of cigarettes to deter more consumption and to raise the funds for the health care costs of tobacco and the health research and the other things that I believe should be funded out of this settlement. But on the advertising, of course, that could be a concern because of the governing legal precedents.

But I still believe that the incentives are there for the tobacco companies to do this. With each new revelation of the strategies which have been vigorously pursued to market cigarettes to children, I think they have an enormous interest in trying to reverse the record of the past to try to put this unforgivable chapter behind them and to start off

on a new path. So I still believe that in the end we will achieve an agreement which will convince them or which they will be convinced will be in their interest.

The advertising issue is the more important one from a legal point of view, but I think we'll get there because they have now—with this evidence continuing to mount up about the deliberate strategy which was followed, they have a big interest in pursuing it.

### ***Independent Counsel's Investigation***

On the other matter, you know, I'm not going to comment on that. I'm going to try to do what the Supreme Court said I should do, which is not to be in any way deterred by this, and I'm going on with my business; others will comment on that.

### ***Japan***

**Q.** Mr. President, Moody's debt rating service earlier today issued a warning about Japan's sovereign debt. The United States has repeatedly urged Japan, with little apparent success, to try to jump start its domestic economy. Do you see any signs that the Japanese Government is now ready to take actions that would help bring it into recovery?

**The President.** Well, the Prime Minister keeps moving forward in ways that the market seems to believe are insufficient. And we have obviously urged aggressive action, because we want the Japanese economy to grow. We think the Japanese economy is the key to stability and growth in Asia, and we have always wanted a strong, healthy Japanese partner.

Japan is a great democracy; they've been a great partner for us; they've been a great engine of economic growth for many years until the last few years. There may be some momentary disruption because now you have some business leaders speaking out in Japan, but it appears to us on the outside of this that there is an ongoing struggle between what is now the articulated view, not only of the United States and others but of the business community in Japan, about the direction that country should take and the entrenched resistance to that in the permanent government bureaucracy that followed a different strategy with great success in previous

years. And I think we need to be both respectful but firm in urging the Japanese to take a bold course.

Prime Minister Hashimoto is an able man, and he understands the economy, and I believe he wants to take such a course. What has to be done is that the people within the permanent government there, which have always enjoyed great power, have to realize that the strategies that worked in the past are not appropriate to the present. They have to make a break now in some ways that's not so different from the break that we made in 1993. You simply can't stay with a strategy that is clearly not appropriate to the times and expect it to get the results that are needed for the country.

But Japan is a very great country full of brilliant people who have a great understanding of economics. And as I said, I think the Prime Minister understands this and is willing to take risks and wants to do it. And he's got this raging battle going on, and I have to hope that the forces of the future will prevail.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:08 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

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## **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

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### ***March 28***

In the morning, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled from Cape Town to Johannesburg, South Africa.

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to the township of Soweto and later returned to Johannesburg.